Exploitation of children of Balmiki/Sweepers in schools

†2411. SHRI KRISHAN LAL BALMIKI: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware of the fact that children of Balmiki/Sweepers are forced to clean toilets in schools even today;

(b) whether they are playing with their lives in this way; and

(c) the action being taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRI D. NAPOLEON) : (a) to (c) No specific instance has been brought to notice of this Ministry in this regard.

Demand to extend SC status to Dalit Muslims and Dalit Christians

2412. SHRI ALI ANWAR ANSARI: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether a large number of MPs, leaders and Chief Ministers across the party line have urged the Prime Minister to extend Scheduled Caste (SC) status of Dalit Muslims and Dalit Christians;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the steps taken to extend SC status to Dalit Muslims and Dalit Christians;

(d) whether Government is planning to introduce a Bill for extending Scheduled Castes status to dalit Muslims during Winter Session of Parliament; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRI D. NAPOLEON) : (a) and (b) Requests have been received for Scheduled Caste status for converts to Christianity and Islam, who originally belonged to castes specified as Scheduled Castes.

(c) to (e) The matter is *sub-judice*.

Hostels for SC/ST students in North-Eastern States

2413. SHRI KHEKIHO ZHIMOMI: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware that the hostels built for SC/ST students at various places in North Eastern States are being used for other means;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the total number of hostels available in North Eastern States for SC/ST students with State-wise details;

(d) whether Government has taken action on the officials concerned or NGOs responsible for that;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.